



## MISSOURI ASSOCIATION OF PROSECUTING ATTORNEYS

**PRESIDENT**  
Daniel K. Knight

[www.moprosecutors.gov](http://www.moprosecutors.gov)

200 Madison St., Ste. 1060  
P.O. Box 899  
Jefferson City, MO 65102  
T: 573-751-0619  
F: 573-751-1171

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**  
Jason H. Lamb

October 14, 2014

**Media Contact:** *Eric Zahnd, 816-858-3476*

### **Missouri Prosecutors Host Regional Best Practices Summit** *Prosecutors from Nine States Gather to Study and Share Best Practices*

Prosecutors take an oath of office to protect both the rights of the innocent and of the accused. Over the last few years, prosecutors from across the state of Missouri have been meeting to discuss the best practices within the criminal justice system.

Last week, prosecutors from Arizona, Illinois, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New York, South Dakota and Wisconsin joined in on the discussion at the Circuit Attorney's Office in St. Louis for a regional "Best Practices for Justice" Summit.

In 2013, Missouri became only the second state in the country to launch its [Best Practices Initiative](#) for prosecutors to study, recommend and work to implement best practices for keeping our communities safe. The committee, established by the **Missouri Association of Prosecuting Attorneys (MAPA)**, was unanimously approved by prosecutors from around the state.

"As prosecutors, we are committed to determining how the criminal justice system can best uphold the rights of all citizens," said **Dan Knight, MAPA President and Boone County Prosecuting Attorney**. "The committee has already recommended areas for improvement and growth in Missouri that we believe will improve the system."

The "Best Practices for Justice" Summit allowed Missouri prosecutors to confer with others from around the region who also care deeply about justice and desire to find ways to improve the criminal justice system. Other states are now in the process of creating or establishing their own versions of a Best Practices Committee.

**Platte County Prosecuting Attorney Eric Zahnd** chairs MAPA's Best Practices Committee. "Excellence in prosecution is good for both crime victims and those accused of committing crimes," Zahnd said. "The United States has the best criminal justice system in the world, but we continue to work very hard in Missouri to make it even better."

The Summit focused on exploring different elements of the criminal justice system to ensure prosecutors are best equipped to fulfill their obligations under the law. Various topics were discussed, including the gathering of forensic and digital evidence, overall ethics and crime prevention. The forum also specifically addressed issues of community, prosecutor and police relations. St. Louis City Assistant Circuit Attorneys highlighted the unique work of the Neighborhood Ownership Model in St. Louis.

"We were honored to share our knowledge on the importance of vital neighborhood partnerships," said **St. Louis Circuit Attorney Jennifer M. Joyce**. "We also heard promising ideas from the other jurisdictions that Missouri prosecutors will continue to explore as we work to seek justice, prevent crime and ensure the safety of all."

This regional summit in St. Louis was the second in a series to be held throughout the country. The initiative is funded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance within the U.S. Department of Justice. **Kristine Hamann, Visiting Fellow at the Bureau of Justice Assistance**, is leading the initiative. Hamann previously served as an Assistant District Attorney in Manhattan, New York.

###